Tributes are paid to celebrated builder of the Ragdoll boat

- see page 2



Blue sky thinking as teenager Tom takes to the air

- see page 7



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Shop era ends afer 29 years



It's the end of an era for shopkeeper Norma Griffiths who is shutting the doors of her Stourbridge premises. Full story – page 15

Freeze legacy to be a bitter cash blow

MAINTENANCE and repairs during the winter freeze have already plunged Dudley council around £350,000 over budget.

And now bosses are bracing themselves for more expense, it has emerged.

The news comes as the Local Government Association — the lobbying organisation which represents more than 350 councils—warned that councils in England will struggle to repair potholes caused by the extreme winter weather.

The LGA says there will be a light of the province of the council of the environmental management budget.

And it warns that the bank balance will not be able to absorb the impact.

The LGA says there will be a light of the province of the council of the environmental management budget.

The LGA says there will be a light of the province of the council of the environmental management budget.

But a report to the council reveals that further cold weather could cost an extra £400,000.

And it warns that the bank balance will not be able to absorb the impact.

weather. The report states: "This could The LGA says there will be a be the most challenging winter £165 million shortfall in funding for the work."

Two jailed on gun offences

high-speed chase through the Black Country.

A hunting knife, two swords in holders and a balaclava were also found in the car which reached speeds of 70mph during the five-mile

One of the men in the car had been asked by a drug dealer to get rid of the weapons, a court was told.

But police began to follow the car when officers on routine patrol noticed the men inside acting suspiciously.

TWO MEN have been jailed after sawn-off shot-guns were thrown from a draw a sit led police on a high-speed chase through the Black Country.

Andrew Twist, aged 29, of Foxdale Drive, Brierley Hill, a sawn-off 12-bore Beretta shotgun and a partially reactishot and a partially reactive shotgun and a partially reactive shotgun and a partially reactive shotgun and a partially reactive stand 12-bore Mossberg found the Black Country.

A glove belonging to Phipps months for the firearms and the Black Country.

A glove belonging to Phipps months for the firearms and for the same of the same and in weather for an effort of the same of the same and in weather for an effort of the same of the same and in weather for an effort of the same of the same and in weather for an effort of the same of the same and in weather for an effort of the same of the same and in weather for an effort of the same and in weather for an effort of the same and in weather for an effort of the same and in weather for an effort of the same and in weather for an effort of the same and in the

Tuesday.

A third man Declan Phipps, 28, of Bank Street, Brierley Hill, was convicted of going equipped for a theft or burglary by a jury and was yesterday jailed for 16 months.

A third man Declan Phipps, 28, of Bank Street, Brierley Hill, was convicted of going equipped for a theft or burglary by a jury and was yester and nine months for two counts of possession of a day jailed for 16 months.

Shotguns

The court heard the bag containing two sawn-off shotguns had been thrown from a carbeing driven by Twist at the end of the high-speed chase in Brierley Hill.

was tound in the car, the court officers as an asx months tor unrelated matter of taking a unrelated matter of taking a car.

He had admitted the firearms offence and been convicted after a trial on the vehicle charge.

Mills was also sentenced to bar additional nine months for breaching a suspended sentence, and sux months tor an unrelated matter of taking a current of the proposed convicted after a trial on the vehicle charge.

Mills was also sentenced to breaching a suspended sentence, and additional nine months for breaching a suspended sentence.

Twist was also sentenced to breaching a suspended sentence, and nine months for a manufacture of possession with acting on behalf of someone intent to supply heroin

vated 12-bore Mossnerg tournt charge.

A glove belonging to Phips was found in the car, the court offences and six months for a unrelated matter of taking a

Easter is target for trams at museum

BLACK Country Living Museum trams and trolleybuses may be out of action until Easter as repair work is done, it has emerged.

They have stopped running after thieves stole a section of over-head electrical wiring at the attraction in Tipton Road.

Bosses said experts were still assessing the extent of the damage to the system's cables and

connectors.

But they hoped the service would be fully operational in time for Easter, which is a big element of the tourist season.

Predict

The cost of work is not yet known.

The museum said that, due to the historic nature of the tramway, it was hard to predict how long restoration would take, as it would require specialist work.

cialist work.

Spokeswoman Fiona
Carding said: "We are
working hard to reinstate the tram and would
hope it would become
fully operational in time
for Easter."

A vintage coach service is now being used to transport visitors around

TOURIST SITES IN BS B

LMOST 200 jobs will be created at Dudley Zoo, the Black Country redevelop in Darlaston.

The West Bromwich Building Society wants a t5m grant to grid the Black Country redevelop in Darlaston.

The Transforming Dudley project would see the worth £46.5 million.

The Transforming Dudley project would see the worth £46.5 million.

The Transforming Dudley project would see the transfer with the strength of the project would see the project worth £46.5 million.

The Plack Country Living Museum create joint visitor and also revitalise their attractions. the Museum and Dudley Canal Trust under a planned investment worth £46.5 million.

The tourist attractions are jointly bidding for cash as part of a Transforming Dudley vision, which will see the attractions revitalised to boost their visitor numbers.

SOURCES

The project has asked for £2m from the government with the rest of its proposed £46.5m investment coming from private sources and Europe.

It is one of four cash bids in the Black

Country.

The Black Country Reinvestment Society is asking for £8m to help create 880 jobs and safeguard 4,968 more by providing loans to help businesses.

tions.

The Black Country Consortium, which works on behalf of the councils, estimates that 20 jobs will be safeguarded at the three organisations and 193 will be created.

A further 90 jobs will be created in the surrounding areas.

Afurther 90008 will be created in the surrounding areas.

The applications for funding from the Government's Regional Growth Fund are being supported by the new Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership.

POSITIVE

The LEP is meant to replace the £300m a year quango Advantage West Midlands which is being scrapped in 2012.

Sarah Middleton, chief executive of the Black

Saran Middleton, there are all these projects are approved for funding they will have a real, positive impact on our community."

Teenager Tom at helm for canal trips



Tom Downing, aged 18, puts the finishing touches to the Blackcountry Man

A FATHER and son team are putting finishing touches to renovating a Black Country narrow-boat which has

boat which has carried hundreds of passengers. The Blackcoun-tryman boat, usually moored at the Bonded Ware-house, off Canal Street, Stourbridge, hosts pleasure cruises, comedy sights and histori cruises, comedy nights and histori-cal tours which highlight the town's glass industry.

Long-serving captain and trip operator Mick Bourne retired aged 64 last year.

Experience

Stourbridge Canal needed a new person at the helm and Tom

helm and Tom Downing, 18, stepped up. His father, Andy, helped transform and update the boat ready for its new season start-ing in spring.

They plan a new series of boat trips to get under way in April.

"We've worked "We've worked together on it which has been good as he has the experience of working in the dry dock," said Tom, of Swan Street, Netherton. Trust bosses decided to choose Tom over six other candidates.

other candidates.



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Children aet in the swim

PARENTS can keep their toddlers occupied with a series of activities at a Stourbridge leisure

series of activities at a Stourbridge leisure centre.

The Crystal Leisure Centre is offering 30-minute swimming sessions, which includes tuition from qualified instructors, on Tuesdays at 2.30pm.

The sessions aim to help parents introduce their children to water in a relaxed way.

Children learn basic water skills through nursery rhymes, games, use of toys and interaction with other toddlers.

Places are now also available on a trampolining course for toddlers.

Children aged between two-and-a-half and five years can enjoy the bouncing sessions, supervised by a qualified coach. The hour-long sessions run on Tuesdays at 12.15pm.

Both courses are now

12.15pm.
Both courses are now running until April. Call 01384 812800 or visit www.dudley.gov.uk/sport

Students in fund debate

STUDENTS from across the West Midlands and beyond went to London to try to save the educa-tional maintenance

In the Commons last week Labour's call for a rethink of the plans was

bost by 317 votes to 258.

MPs Pat McFadden,
Ian Austin, Margot
James and Paul Uppal
were lobbied by Dudley
College students.

Builder of Ragdoll boat dies after illness fight







THE Black Country craftsman who built the legendary TV canal boat Ragdoll, the star of the popular children's TV show Rosie and Jim, has died at the age of 75.

dled at the age of 70.

David Baugh, owner and
manager of manufacturers
Black Country Narrowboats,
died following an eight-year
battle with illness.

He had suffered from Parkinson's
Disease and cancer.

Special

His business partner of 30 years and close friend Carol Hutchings, aged 67, has paid tribute to "a very special man".

"David was a wonderful man. He

Friend pays tribute to 'a very special man'

was very kind, and generous, and always willing to help anyone who needed it, 'she said.
"He was a fantastic boat builder. Boats were his life. We were one of the leading boat builders in the country.

"The boats that he designed and built are a tribute to him in them-

selves."

During his working life Walsallborn Mr Baugh, who lived with Miss Hutchings in Prestwood Drive, Stourton, near Stourbridge,

designed and created numerous boats for actors, writers, and other

high-flying businessmen.

He and Miss Hutchings were also responsible for exporting the first British canal boat to Canada, to be part of a 'traditional British village' project on the Rideau Canal, Ontario, in the early 1980s.

Miss Hutchings said what made

him stand out, and made him so popular, was his "unique" style of

canal boats.
It was this vision which caught

the eye of those behind Rosie and Jim, who asked him to create their boat Ragdoll.

"He was very proud of the Ragdoll project," Miss Hutchings said.

"In one way it was just another job but meant a lot to him to be involved." the eye of those behind Rosie and

Donation

He leaves behind a son, 48-year-old Jeremy Faulkner-Court.

Mr Baugh's funeral will be held at Stourbridge Crematorium tomor-row (January 28), beginning at

2.10pm.

Miss Hutchings said the family would like people to make a donation to the Parkinson's Disease Society, instead of sending flowers.

Society, instead of sending flowers.

"He was my best friend and I'm going to miss him like hell," she said. would not be necessary."

Protest blocks bridge scheme

A CONTROVERSIAL A CONTROVERSIAL scheme to reduce a busy Stourbridge rail bridge to single lane traffic has been shelved for "less drastic" works to be considered.

Dudlay Council

Council Dudley Council planned the scheme to save wear and tear on the bridge, in Vicarage Road, Amblecote.

There were also plans to demolish a nearby traffic island and replace it with traffic lights.

But the proposals have now been halted follownow been halted following a wave of protest from residents in Vicarage Road, Kirkstone Way and Hillgrounds Road who say they were not consulted on the work.

Scale

Councillors said they had not been told either and felt "humiliated".

The scheme has now been pulled temporarily following talks between councillors and officers to allow full consultation to

And councillors for the town said that whatever work took place would not be on the same scale as had been originally planned.

Councillor Angus Adams, cabinet member for transportation on Dudley Council, said: "We have an obligation as an authority to ensure the safety of railway bridges.

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Firm to clean up after expansion

LYE company Scot Young

LYE company Scot Young Research has moved to new premises to expand the business, after securing a £1.5 million funding package.

The origins of the company go back to 1954 when entrepreneur Scot Young emigrated from the UK to Canada and started a window cleaning business in Toronto, then an internal building cleaning company.

Toronto, then an internal building cleaning company.

Following this success, Scot returned to the UK opening similar businesses in Glasgow and Manchester.

Further expansion followed worldwide and included opening a branch in Birmingham in 1977.

In 1985 the business switched from cleaning to the manufacturing of cleaning equipment and materials.

Today, SYR has three manufacturing bases in the USA, China

and Lye, where it employs 150 people. Now, with financial support from NatWest Business and Commercial Banking, it has expanded into newly-renovated premises on Dudley Road.

The purchase has seen SYR expand its production and assembly facility.

Company secretary Dave Deo said: "At SYR we pride ourselves on inventing, innovating, manufacturing and assembling cleaning equipment and materials."

Excited

Excited

He added: "This dedication has meant we have grown our cus-tomer base even during these challenging times, and have challenging times, and have needed to find a bigger work

"We are very excited about the expansion into new premises and for the business benefits it will

bring for both us and our cus

The move brought new life to a Black Country factory, the site had been occupied by Bronx Manufacturing.

The building went on the market for £1.4 million in 2009

market for £1.4 million in 2009 after the collapse of the firm after nearly 70 years at the Lye site.

About 30 workers at Bronx, which produced large machinery, were made redundant.

When the sale deal was first sealed, SYR chairman and owner Scot Young, aged 74, said he was "thrilled" the company had signed the papers and now owned the factory.

"This is a huge step forward for the local economy," he said at the time. "We are a company which is getting stronger and stronger and this move is a result of that. We need a bigger site."



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Protesters greet plans inspector





ABOUT 20 householders turned out to see a Government planning inspector Titanic anchor back to carry out a final site visit before a decision is made on proposals to build 39 houses on green space in Hagley.

A decision on the scheme had been expected lest week but was

A decision on the scheme had been expected last week but was delayed to allow one last visit. Planning inspector Ruth Mackenzie was joined by representatives from developers Kite and Billingham to look around the site last Wednesday. Residents stood around the entrance of the land between Brook Crescent and Western Road when she arrived. Paul Thatcher, aged 57, of Brook Crescent, said villagers went along because they wanted to make an impact ahead of the vertict.

Demolished

He said: "We are all opposed to these plans because they are completely wrong for the area and we want to make that

clear."
Residents told her that the local infrastructure would not be able to cope with the extra houses, and said there would be increased traffic and doctors' surgeries would be over-subscribed.

But Ms Mackenzie said she could not discuss any planning issues with them as she could only take into account written

only take into account written responses.

An appeal has been submit-ted by developers after original plans were rejected by Broms-grove District Council.

Of the homes on the site, 16 would be two-bedroom and 23 four bedreom

Replica anchor's future is settled

PLANS are under way to take a replica of the Titanic anchor back to

Confusion surrounded the future of the anchor when council chiefs gave conflicting messages over plans to move it to plans to move Netherton. The Netherton. The 18ft anchor is on display at the Black Country Living Museum in Tipton Road, Dudley, after it was paraded through Nether-ton last year

paraded through Nether-ton last year.

Residents of Nether-ton, home to the factory where the original anchor was built, have been calling for the replica to be returned there ever since.

Tourism

Last month. Deputy Dudley Council Leader Councillor Les Jones sparked outrage by suggesting it might be better for tourism if it was left at the museum. But now it has been revealed that plans are being made to set un a permanent home set un a permanent home.

plans are being made to set up a permanent home for it in Netherton. Dudley Council spokesman Chris Howes said: "We are currently working up proposals to bring the replica Titanic anchor back to Nether-ton." ton." Councillor Tracy Wood

or the nomes on the site, 16 councilior fracy wood, would be two-bedroom and 23 four-bedroom.

A house in Brook Crescent, which had been bought by developers Billingham and kitte, would be demolished as part of the plans.

Councilior fracy wood, ward councillor for Netherton, said: "This is positive but things could easily change again, and if there is any doubt it wort be returned we will be campaigning."

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Protesters sunk by Government marina verdict

PROTESTERS' hopes of throwing out controversial plans for a 199-boat marina near Stourbridge have been dashed after the Government announced it would not intervene in the

case.
Campaigners who have been fighting against the the plans in Swindon said they were "stunned" by the Government's decision not to call in the proposals for a final review.

review. Plans to flood acres of green belt to create the marina have sparked objections from more than 300 res-

idents.

Four out of 10 parish councillors recently resigned from their posts over South Staffordshire Council's decision to approve the project, claiming their concerns had been ignored.

Green

Now the Government Office for the West Midlands has opted not to review or overturn the council's decision, giving developers Timothy and Joanna Munday the green light to start work.

They couple have already scaled back the size of the proposed marina from 252 berths, as well as evaluating memocal back the size of the proposed marina from 252 berths, as well as

excluding proposed boat hire and repair facilities, in response to

repair facilities, in response to public anger.

The government's decision not to review the approval of the plans appears to reinforce Tory claims that local authorities will have

that local authorities will have planning decisions. But some residents revealed that they plan to challenge the decision by seeking a judicial review.

South Staffordshire MP Gavin Williamson, who wrote to secretary of state for local government Eric Pickles calling for the government to intervene, said: "I'm absolutely stunned.

"A development of this size and significance on green belt land should be called in and opened up to great scrutiny.

"Specialist

Specialist

"I think there should have been a full planning inquiry."

Campaigner Terry Carvin, who has co-ordinated efforts of residents' groups including the Swindon Civic Society, Civic Alliance, and the Marina Action Group, said: "We are now in the process of starting a the case for a judicial review and will be seeking advice from a specialist."

Approval for the development was given with a number of conditions, including that the developers must advertise job opportunities locally, provide public access and share the 130-space car park with visitors to Swindon High Street.

Campaigners fear the village will be swallowed up by the development, but the provision of a new car park and the likelihood of increased footfall for village businesses has split opinion.

Professional gardeners Lynn



Good for the village - Lillian Owen



Hairdresser Janine Clark Gardeners Derek and Lynn Turton

and Derek Turton, of nearby Trysull, said they understood both sides of the debate.

Mr Turton, 54, said: "Businesses like the post office and the pubs will do well out of it because there's going to be more people around." But there have been concerns raised about security."

Little

Janine Clark, co-owner of Amathus hair salon on Swindon High Street, said customers were

deners Derek and Lynn Turton
divided but added: "Most people
who live in the village itself don't
want the development because
they moved to a little village and
they want it to remain a little
village."
Retired resident Lillian Owen
said: "People have had concerns
about diesel fumes, traffic problems and flooding.
"But I personally think it will be
a very good thing for the village."
Mr and Mrs Munday were
unavailable for comment.

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thechronicle

Gym joy with move next door A MARTIAL ARTS club in Dudley is preparing to unveil its new premises weeks after the nightclub went into administration and closed. The Black Country Martial Arts gym had been based in Gym owner Mick Wolohan, premises next door. And after messages and offers of support flooded in, Mr into administration and closed. Gym owner Mick Wolohan, premises next door.

ciosed. The Black Country Martial Gym owner Mick Wolohan, Arts gym had been based in the basement of JBs nightclub, in Castle Hill, for the past 17 find a new home. ciosed. deal of up to five years for Gym owner Mick Wolohan, aged 43, appealed to townsfolk The martial arts gym is to take up a lease in the former Trading Post store.

And after messages and offers of support flooded in, Mr Wolohan was able to agree a deal of up to five years for

Yes to homes

Stolen antiques found at home

PLANS to demolish a derelict factory unit in Lye and build five houses in its place have been given the go-ahead.
Dudley Council planners have approved the scheme in Seymour Road.
But the green light is subject to a number of conditions.

AN UNEMPLOYED father-of-five branded "idle" by a judge was told to do 250 hours' unpaid work after being caught with £8,000 of stolen antiques. Police searched 55-year-old Frederick Price's home in Meadow Road, Dudley, and

found an illegal stun gun hidden inside a vase. Valuable old cameras were found in a caravan outside his daughter's home.

Price, who has not had a job for 20 years, admitted handling stolen property and possessing a

A life in rhyme – how poetry inspired Lucy to go into print at 81

POET from Halesowen has released her first book at the age of 81 after spending more than seven decades penning pieces about her life.

Lucy Williams, of Firth Park Cresent, has been compiling poems and short stories since she was a teenager.

Now the very best of her work can be found in the new collection entitled Midland Memories which is due out in February.

Midland Memories which is due out in February.

Lucy, who has lived alone since her husband Dennis died in 1997, has found much of her inspiration from those around her.

While a selection of her work has been published in poetry anthologies, the prolific writer never believed that she would one day be appearing alongside other famous poets on book shelves.

Although Lucy finds it a struggle to walk long distances, the dedicated church-goer makes sure that she never misses a service at the Hurst Green family church.

It was her friends and fellow parishioners that urged her to get her work

ioners that urged her to get her work printed after so many years of her talents

going un-noticed.

Lucy said: "I have been writing poetry for

S.Hazelwood@expressandstar.co.uk

more years than I can remember.
"Earlier this year I decided that it was time to do something with my work and I am very pleased with how the final book looks.

looks.
"Although I am looking forward to seeing how successful the book is, to be honest I really don't mind how many copies I sell because the fact that I have achieved what I set out to do is the main thing for me." While some of the poems in the book go back many years, the collection also includes touching contributions dedicated to her late husband and sister's son-in-law, who was killed in a plane crash.

Courage

Courage
Originally born in Birmingham, Lucy
and her husband moved to Halesowen in
the 1960s where she continued her job as a
home help, work she did for 29 years.
Although the couple never had any
family, Lucy is surrounded by a network of
neighbours and friends who rally round to
ensure she never goes without.
Lucy, who suffers badly from arthritis in
her spine, hips and knees, added: "I don't go

out much at all these days but with the support of my friends I was able to complete the book and have the courage to approach the publishers. When I found out my work was going to be published I was over the moon that all of my efforts had been recognised.

"When you are on your own and in the house a lot you have two options, you can sit and dwell on what life could be like or you can keep your mind occupied and really focus on doing something that makes you happy.

"Poetry is a way of expressing how I feel and a lot of the pieces in the book reflect on certain times of my life that have affected me while presenting the things in life that I am passionate about.
"I have thoroughly enjoyed putting the

I am passionate about.

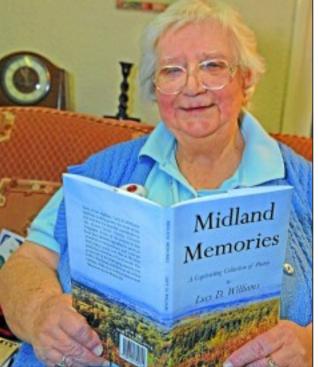
I am passionate about.

Thave thoroughly enjoyed putting the book together and I hope it's something that many will appreciate.

Publishers are currently in talks with a string of high street retailers and local libraries to get copies of the touching collection on their shelves.

The book which has been self-funded will be available on special order for WH 6mith and Waterstones at £7.99.

A share of the profits will be donated to the Hurst Green family church and a club for the disabled which meets there.



Lucy Williams, aged 81, with her new book of poents - Midland Memories

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Tom, 16 soars away into the record books



Thumb up as Tom Barker prepares for take-off

A 16-YEAR-OLD from Hagley soared into the record books when he took to the skies above the Black

books when he took to the skies above the Black Country.

Tom Barker became the youngest pilot in the UK ofly the four-seater Cirrus SR20 solo when he set off on a 45-minute circuit from Halfpenny Green Airport in Bobbington.

The teenager, a pupil at Haybridge High School in Brake Lane, Hagley, has been flying under instruction for two years with Flight Academy Wolverhampton.

Tom is keen to take up a career in the cockpit when older.

Licence

He completed the solo flight just a month after he became eligible to fly solo, having turned 16 on December 8.

"It's very exciting to be the youngest to do it," Tom

"It was fantastic, I loved it. I have always been fas-

inted by planes.
"When we have gone on holiday – from our first one to Spain when I was seven – I have always been always the flight." excited about the flight."

Tom's next target is to secure his pilot licence when he is 17.

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Tom Barker, aged 16, in flight at the controls of the Cirrus SR20

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NEXT TO 4

thechronicle

Ring and Ride service in £900,000 shortfall

Keeping fit with fancy footwork

A NEW tap dancing class is starting in Halesowen which offers a fun way to keep fit as well as learning some fancy footwork at the same time.

The course is held at Halesowen library on Monday afternoons and learners will incorporate basic tap steps into dance routines which explore different types of music and rhythms.

Dance teacher Anna

Ďance teacher Anna Fusco, who already has classes in

The course is run by Dudley Council's Adult and Community Learning Team and by the end of the 10 week course learners will be able to perform a series of basic tap steps, follow a simple dance routine and perform sequences safely.

Exercise

Exercise

Councillor David Simms,
Cabinet Member for
Libraries and Adult Learning, said:

"This is a fun way to exercise and improve fitness and also helps to improve spatial and physical awareness. There are lots of courses available for adult learners including other dance courses for belly dancing and ballroom and it's a great way to learn new skills and meet people."

The tap dancing course takes place in the Casloin Suite at Halesowen library on Mondays from 2pm to 3.30 pm. To book a place contact Pat Shaw at Leasowes Community College put 1334 1816937

sowes Community College on 01384 816287.



A tap dance class run by Anna Fusco, who is helping to set up the new group in Haleoswen

A LIFELINE transport service used by thousands of West Midlands pen-sioners is facing a £900,000 budget black hole.

black hole.

Elderly and disabled people may be charged to use the Ring and Ride service in future, or the number of trips it runs may be cut to try to plug the funding gap. Taxpayers paid £12million to help keep the service on the road this year.

However, the seven West Midlands councils that fund the service have had to cut back on the amount they pay to run it while costs such as fuel have soared. Ring and Ride was launched in 1983 and operates around two million trips a year in the region.

year in the region. Passengers book their journey over the

phone, giving details of where they want to be picked up and taken to, and the time

to be picked up and taken to, and the time they want to travel.

Bosses at West Midlands Special Needs Transport, the charity which operates Ring and Ride, and the transport authority Centro, which funds the service with money provided by the councils, are now appealing to passengers to help decide how to make those savings.

Important

More than 30,000 users are being sent questionnaire asking them to vote for

More than 30,000 users are being sent a questionnaire asking them to vote for one of two options.

The first is to make an eight per cent reduction in the number of services being run, which could see the withdrawal of some services in the evenings or other times of the day.

The alternative is to introduce charges in the form of either an annual membership fee of £36, the equivalent of 69p a week, or a single trip fare of 60p.

The service is currently free for those with a senior citizen's or disabled person's pass.

Centro's chief executive Geoff Inskip, said: "It plays an extremely important role in our region's public transport system which is why we have given the charity more than £12m this year.

"Unfortunately, there is a pressing need for the seven West Midland councils to reduce expenditure in this period of

to reduce expenditure in this period of severe financial constraint."

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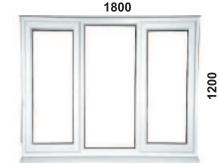


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Photographers in the frame with new exhibition



From left, John Smith, Mike Edwards, who won best picture, and Rick Williams

Hundreds of pictures showcased

FROM canal scenes to an aerial display by the Red Arrows keen amateur photographers in the Black Country are showcasing the best of their work.

Hundreds of pictures taken both home and abroad are showcased in the annual exhibition by Dudley Camera Club.

The club has more than 40 members with several people joining its ranks this year. Around 170 photographs adorn the walls of Dudley Museum and Art Gallery while a further 130 are projected onto a large screen as part of the exhibition.

Winner of the best overall image this year was 74-year-old Mike Edwards with his picture called Page with a red hat. Mr Edwards, from Sedgley, also claimed a prize for his image called Italian Students which was highly commended by judges.

Among those whose work is taking pride of place in the exhibition is retired engineer John Smith, aged 72, from Wolverhampton Road, Sedgley, who has been a member for six years.

His pictures include a snow scene taken while on holiday in north Wales in November.

ber.
The exhibition runs until March 5. For details call 0121 550 3240.



'Girl in an Alcove' won best picture



'Barges and Reflections' by Alan Messei



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All sett fair for the Badger group

YOUNGSTERS from a Kidder-minster youth group were left smiling when they were presented with a cheque for \$250.0 m. Mich a with a cheque for \$250.0 m. Mich a will ago roup and said the money, Kidderminster St John Ambu-lance Badgers, based on Birming-ham Road, received the donation from the Midcounties Co-operative. It will go towards materials are made and widands Co-operative. It will go towards materials are minister to educational projects through-counting and generous donation, which will sadge merous donation, which will sadge merous donation, which will be added the money, because the form the minister states and persons donation, which will sadge merous donation, which will sadge merous donation, which will be added the money, breather and Middands Co-op enough for their support and generous donation, which will be added to the money, breather and middands Co-op enough for their support and generous donation, which will be added to the money, breather and middands Co-op enough for their support and generous donation, which will be added to the money, breather and middands Co-op enough for their support and generous donation, which will be added to the money, breather and middands Co-op enough for their support and generous donation, which will be added to the money, breather and middands Co-op enough for their support and generous donation, which will be added to the money, breather and middands Co-op enough for their support and generous donation, which will and generous donation, which will and generous donation, which will be added to the money, breather and middants co-op enough the middentification and the money, and the money of the middentification and the money, and the money of the middentification and the money of the middentification and the money of the middle middentification and the money of the middentification and the money of the middle middentification and the money of the middle

Company delight as export sales shoot up 150pc

Limbering up for fitness campaign



A DUDLEY firm which has been at the heart of Black Country industry for 60 years has fought the recession to increase

years has fought the recession to increase exports sales by 150 per cent.

For decades AJT Equipment has been making a name for itself producing test machines for a variety of tools and equipment.

Often one-of-a-kind orders, the products made in the factory in Brockmoor have ended up on all corners of the world.

Some of the machines have been used to test the impact of stress on equipment such as all pines.

Some of the machines have been used to test the impact of stress on equipment such as oil pipes. Director Ian Gordon said the firm had come out of the latest recession fighting and was on track to have one of its best ever trading years with export sales up by 150 per cent, from £330,000 to £820,000.

The firm exports to countries including Russia

The firm exports to countries including Russia India and Australia, Spain and Nigeria. Mr Gordon, aged 43, began working for the firm based on the Premier Partnership Estate in The Leys, as an apprentice aged 17.

In 1979, his father Peter Gordon, along with business partners Derek Hill and Graham Hill and Graham Zambra, took over the firm, which had originally been founded in 1951. Mr Zambra later stepped down leaving his two colleagues to develop the company into the firm it is today.

Recessions

Over the years the business has been forced Park Rangers Nicola Cranshaw, front, and Mary Spiers prepare for the new classes AnyYoNE who a beautiful place to take overindulged in mince pies and turkey over the new classes and as it doesn't cost a festive season is urged to sign up for a beginner at festive season is urged to sign up for a beginner at festive season is urged to sign up for a beginner at festive season is urged to sign up for a beginner at festive season is urged to sign up for a beginner at festive season is urged to sign up for a beginner at festive season is urged to sign up for a beginner. There is no need to pre-book and participants are asked to meet at the hub building, off the fact of Dudley Council's Healthy Towns imitative and classes will also be held at parks in Halesowen and Dudley.

Mary Stevens Park fewas hosting its first session today (January 27) from Ilam-noon.

Councillor David Stanley, cabinet member for environment and cluture, said: "Our hub based activities are one of many ways in which residents can get involved with the at the website the firm borough, starting in budger and endersors and exercises and exercises and exercises and exercises and exercise and as it doesn't cost a festive store for the number of warkers fell to four. But two vears later the firm employed 15



Manager Julie Parry of Stourbridge

Groups get cash help

A NUMBER of commu

A NUMBER of community groups across
Dudley are to benefit
from a cash injection
through the Central
Dudley Area Committee
capital allocation fund.
Old Farm Tenants and
Residents' Association
requested £276 to help
buy a new laptop computer and printer to
support the organisation's work.
Woodside Community
Association in Netherton
requested £1,306 to help
buy a grit spreader to
make pathways safe
during bad weather.
total of £653 was offered
to the group.

Tributes paid to tragic Lisa

A 21-YEAR-OLD Kidderminster woman died in bed from neumonia less than two days after falling ill with flu-like symptoms.

Lisa Wimbush's mother, Amanda Tovey, lay next to her bed through the night and raised the alarm when she did not wake up the next day at the home they shared in Trimpley Drive.

An inquest at Stourport heard that Lisa, a volunteer at the British Heart Foundation shop in Kidderminster, died on November 25 from acute bronchopneumonia and a verdict of natural causes was recorded.

They were summed up by one lisa, a former pupil at Wolver-legality, he said.

They were summed up by one lisa, a former pupil at Wolver-legality, he said.

They were summed up by one legality, he said.

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They were bunch of Cinder Bank, betherdon, but now of Whaley shared in Trimpley Drive.

An inquest at Stourport heard that Lisa, a volunteer at the British Heart Foundation shop in Kidderminster, died on November 25 from acute bronchopneumonia and a verdict of natural causes was recorded.

Tributes to Lisa flooded in after

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Chainmaker Sarann a link to family past - aged nine



Sarann Bradney, 7, hard at work in the chain shop

HEARING the clunk of a steel nammer against the links of a chain, you would expect the person doing the battering to be a brawny man rather than a nine-year-old girl.

Sarann Bradney has been going to Mushroom Green Chain Shop, in Netherton, since she was just three months old to watch her father Mick at work.

Mick is the sixth representation of chainwakers and is

Mick is the sixth generation of chainmakers and is keen to teach the skills that have been passed down to him from his great-great-great grandfather, who was from Mushroom Green.

om Mushroom Green. His family had a chain shop in the village for around 200 years and he grew up surrounded by the industry.

Different

Standing by the red-hot furnace at the Quarry Road chain making museum, Mick says: "As we waited for the bus in the morning to take us to Corngreaves School we would stand by the fires to keep warm.

There were chainmakers, fires and furnaces every where round here. People can't imagine it these days, but even at 5am you would hear the hammers going."



Mick Bradney, Annette and daughter Sarann

Mick, who works at Solid Stampings, in Cradley Heath, recalls how his father Arthur would take him to various chainmaking workshops. The young lad would cautiously stand by the doors and watch the men working on the huge links.

"It was something I always wanted to do," says Mick, now 61. "From the age of five my dad would put me by the fire with a piece of iron, a pair of tongs and a hammer, and let me play.

"At that time there weren't any women chainmakers, although I know that my grandmother and her mother had done it."

Mick still uses a hammer that is around 100 years old and was used by his great-grandmother.

"I see hammers like this in museums, but because I'm a traditional chainmaker I still use the old equipment passed down to me," he says.

"The last woman chainmaker was Lucy Woodall, but I'm keen to pass the skills on to the next generation. I've taught my wife Annette how to make chain and watching her learn these forgotten skills is like seeing a dinosaur come back to life."

Mick lives in Trejon Road, Cradley Heath with Annette and daughter Sarann.

Annette says she has watched Mick making chain for years and then in May decided to give it a go. "I took to it within weeks," says Annette, aged 46.

"A few months ago I did my first demonstration at the Mushroom Green shop and then went over to the Black Country Living Museum. Once you're into it, chainmaking is addictive. I would like to teach other women."

Original

Original

The Mushroom Green chain shop dates from the 1950s and is run by Dudley Council. Records show chainmaking in Mushroom Green in 1810. Workers who made nails adapted their hearths to make chain. By the end of the 19th century most properties in Mushroom Green had a chain shop close to them and several survived into the 20th century.

Only one remains in its original form, having been restored by the council and the Black Country Society. Sarann, a pupil at Timbertree Primary School, in Valley Road, Cradley Heath, says she has grown up watching her dad making chain.

"I have been coming down to Mushroom Green since I was little. "I've always been interested in it and want to be a metal work artist. I'm a different girl to the others at school as they are into new clothes and shoes," she says.

"I think I'm better off than them because I have a loving family – and my chainmaking."







Mick making chain at Mush-room Green, Netherton Netherton, above, watched by his father Arthur Bradney, and, left, with infant daughter Sarann nine

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Shop farewell after 29 years

SHOPKEEPER Norma Griffiths is bidding a fond farewell to loyal customers

farewell to loyal customers as she prepares to close her Black Country cosmetics store after nearly 30 years.

Mrs Griffiths, aged 61, will sell her last lipstick on Saturday at Norma's Cosmetics, which she has run in the Crown Centre, Stourbridge, for the last 29 years. She said it had been a difficult decision but felt the time was right to retire.

Mrs Griffiths said planned improvements to the Crown Centre would mean moving the business for a second time and she did not want the upheaval. It transferred from its original home in Spencer's Market to a vacant shop nearby in the Crown Centre when the market

closed in 2008. It will leave just a single store trading in the centre, the Cool Trader shop which sells frozen food.
"I am a bit long in the tooth to move everything again. It just feels like the right time to call it a day," she said.
"It is very sad and more than a few tears will be shed when I close. My customers have already said how sorry they will be when the store closes.
"One lady was in tears and I had to take her into the back. The people of Stourbridge have been wonderful and I'll miss them deeply. I'd like to thank everyone who has supported me."

me."
Mrs Griffiths plans to spend her retirement carrying out vol-unteer work for charities in the borough.



Worker Tracy Stanford, left, and Norma Griffiths enjoy a last cuppa before



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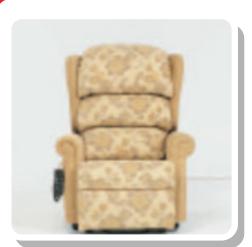
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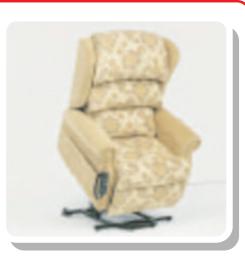


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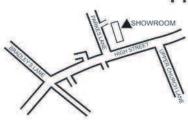
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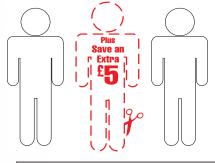








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Helping skin to weather winter chill

on our skin, from naughty indulgences throughout the festive period to the effects of the harsh winter weather, leaving our skin looking dull and life-

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A warming cleanse to strip the skin of the morning's impurities without overdrying the skin
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A deep cleansing clay mask
Application of SkinCeuticals Hydrating B5 Gel to replenish and hydrate the skin and explait of skin Derma Performance Repair Serum - protecting against Uvinduced cell changes and helping to reverse the ageing process in cellular activity. Anti-Ageing Expert Nicky Hambleton-Jones from Channel 4's Ten Years Younger says: "It's not always easy to keep our skin looking good, and normal day-to-day activities can soon take their toll. This quick fix treatment is a great way of ridding your skin of any impurities."

The treatment takes 30 minutes so you could even squeeze it into your lunch break. The clinic offers solutions to other proboem areas.

proboem areas.

If you are fed up with waxing and shaving

sk:n offers a safe, long-term solution to unwanted hair via its pain-free laser hair removal treatment.

More than 10,000 clients per month are α εκαιεσ τοτ this specific problem -the most 'popular' areas being face, underarms and bikini line, whilst men are most likely to seek treat-ment for their back, shoulders and chest.

chest.

A laser beam is focused on the hair follicles beneath the skin's surface to disable the follicle quickly and safely and stop the hair from growing. A course of laser hair treatments will leave your skin soft and smooth.

If you are maybe regretting that rash decision to have a tattoo all is not lost. Research shows that one in three people who have a tattoo later wish they hadn't had it done. The good news is that the latest laser technology means tattoos can be removed relatively painlessly with minimal fuss and no scarring at sk:n.

Solution

And what about thread veins? If you have unsightly facial or leg thread veins, sk:n's advanced laser treatments for thread vein removal can remove both fine and large veins quickly and effectively. Two or three thread vein treatments are usually enough. Alternatively, sk:n offers sclerotherapy – this involves the injection of a saline solution into the affected area, to disperse the thread vein. thread vein.

And for mums, there is a solution to those

And for mums, there is a solution to those annoying stretch marks? They may be the sign of a special time in your life – but once your baby arrives, they're the last thing you want! sk:n offers state—of-the-art techniques, to dramatically improve stretch marks, by reducing their depth and colour, and regaining smoothness. By using one particular type of laser, called a Pulsed Dye laser, the appearance of stretch marks may be improved, especially those stretch marks



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changes to the skin. This test, which normally costs £25, is priced at a special rate
of just £1 – and 100 per cent of all proceeds
raised will be donated to the British Skin
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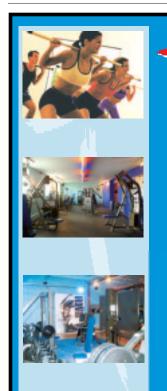
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Changing Lifestyles

Keep gardening diary of success and failure

A NEW year brings new beginnings in all our lives and especially in our

It's time to take stock of last year to see what went well and learn what we can do better this season.

I'm full of optimism for 2011, writes John Clowes. The positive uplift that gar-dening provides, together with the benefit of regular exercise, will see me investing more time in the garden and on the allot-

ment.
Hopelly all families will be doing the same – especially if there are children to teach. Keeping notes of successes and failures provides good pointers for better results this year.
My successes include a great crop of carrots that had little damage from carrot root fly. This proves that 1 m walls of clear plastic do prevent the flying females from laying their eggs and ruining my carrot crop.

Just four plants of yellow courgettes (T&M F1 Hybrid 'Soleil') weren't prolific enough for the kitchen and I must grow two or three green ones to boost total yields.

Stringless

They were completely unaffected by mildew, but perhaps they needed some extra feeding with Miracle-Gro Fruit & Vegetable Plant Food.

My climbing French beans, Sultana, proved worth their weight in gold. They cropped well during the warm weather of June and July producing mountains of long, tender and stringless pencil-podded beans.

beans.
Only by the end of August were the pink-

Only by the end of August were the pink-flowered runner beans Celebration produc-ing anything like the same amount. Family and neighbours agreed the French beans were the best they had tasted. They are on my seed list again this year, as will be butternut squash Cobnut that produced good winter squash that ripened and stored well.



French beans Sultana proved popular with family and friends

French beans Sultana proved Japanese anemones make a great flower display in the autumn, but standard varieties grow to quite a size that is too big for most narrow flower beds. That's why the compact variety Pretty Lady Diana' was a great addition in my garden. So too was Thompson & Morgan's first-ever red rudbeckia, Cherry Brandy. Shrub discovery of 2010 was Loropetalum chinense Fire Dance. This relative of the witch hazel is evergreen with plenty of small heart-shaped leaves plum red in colour that carry along its stems deep pink spidery flowers. It seems to bloom all summer through from March to October, although the textbooks will tell you it produces most blooms in spring. The books will also say it will grow to 1 - 2m tall, although my plant is spreading outwards, rather than upwards, and makes a wonderful ground-hugging display.

wonderful ground-hugging display.

And on to the reverse side of the garden-

ing coin - here are some of the 'not so good' results from 2010. All my sowings of rocket leaves were affected badly by flea beetle that drilled holes into every leaf, making all unsuitable for the salad bowl. Next year I will try to grow undamaged leaves in pots on the patio using Miracle-Gro All Purpose Compost.

Purple sprouting broccoli this year was disappointing as the pigeons ate more of the crop than the family. That's because the netting has developed holes over the years and must be replaced. Pests must be excluded totally if you are to get a half

excluded totally if you are to get a half decent crop. Text and photographs supplied Scotts Miracle-Gro Company. Always read the label and use pesticides safely. BugClear™ Ultra for Pots and BugClear™ Ultra Gun!





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Tile style can make a major difference

THE quickest and easiest way to bring about a dramatic transformation, whilst also adding value to your home, is with tiles

is wirn files.

Brighten up that tired kitchen with bright, shiny wall tiles. The latest trend is for bright vibrant colours; they can turn the "engine room" of the season into a high-tech kitchen that even a celebrity chef would be proud of.

kitchen that even a colour, proud of.
With all those people going in and out of your house why not tile the floors that get the most punishment. Kitchen floors that are tiled are hygienic and trouble free and a hall or porch with a tiled floor won't be damaged by dripping brollies, dribbling wellies and mudy dogs.

I ifetime

Lifetime

Bathrooms and cloakrooms are also hard to keep fresh. Tiled floors are easy to keep clean, very smart looking and don't mind if you don't quite shut the shower door. For extra luxury add undertile heating. It is surprisingly inexpensive and easy to install. You can put floor tiles on most suspended wooden floors – consult a member of The Tile Association.

And with it being that time of year again everybody is looking for a bargain. Here are a few tips on buying tiles in the sales. Always buy more tiles than you need. You should slightly over estimate anyway for breakages and cuts but think to the future.

future.

Tiles can last a lifetime and in five years a new bath, a new shower screen or new radi ators can leave small gaps. Tiles bought in

the sales are unlikely to be available again.
Mix and match. You can buy small quantities of different tiles and create panels, stripes or a chequerboard

Choose a bold create an accent

panel or feature wall using cheaper plain tiles as the background. Choose vibrant metallic or glass borders that aren't in the sale and team with plain coloured tiles from the bargain section. Work your scheme out carefully before you buy and do make sure that the tiles are the same size and thick-

that the tiles are the same size and thick-ness.

Mosaic tiles come on a mesh background and can be easily cut into strips to make a border of any width you like. You can team these with large format white tiles for a very stylish bathroom. Buy more of the mosaic and create an accent wall over the bath, in the shower or above the basin with a mirror set in.

set in.

Buy decorated tiles and panels for your kitchen and team with cheaper plain tiles. Once again do be sure they are the same size. For a really minimalist look choose white tiles for your kitchen walls and use a bright primary colour just behind the hob. You can often find plain tiles in size

100x200mm left over from commercial projects. Working it out carefully you can create brick effect, herringbone and basket weave

Mixing tiling by using it horizontally and vertically can be a really effective (www.bathroomtilesdesigns.com)

patters to name just three. The brick effect patters to name just tirree. In Birtick effect looks really good in deep colours used half way up a wall in a hall way. Top with a border and a moulding in tile or wood and you have an almost indestructible surface on a wall that gets lots of hard wear.

Reliable

On floors use the herringbone and basket weave patterns to make plain floor tiles look special. For a very rustic look choose a chequerboard floor in red and black or brown and black unglazed tiles or choose black and white for a more Victorian effect.

Select carefully and plan beforehand and you can add lasting value to your home at

sales prices.
For more information on using tiles go to www.tiles.org.uk. It is the website of The Tile Association which represents all aspects of the wall and floor tile industry in the UK, from manufacture to installation. There you can download a copy of the DIY guide "Tile it Right", find a reputable tile supplier and find a reliable and experienced tile fixer.

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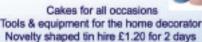
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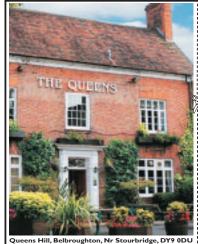
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It runs at Birmingham's LG Arena from February 23-27 and the organisers have teamed up with the Chroni-



chance to win a family ticket (four tickets that can be used (four tickets that can be used for adults or adults and children). The tickets are for the opening night of Wednesday, February 23.

The show features an array of favourite Disney characters, including Mickey Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Dept of Cooff Ditte Pales.

Mouse, Minnie Mouse, Donald, Goofy, Pluto, Baloo, Disney Princesses Snow White and Cinderella, Stitch, Disney/Pixar's The Incredi-bles and Buzz Lightyear.

Popular

Popular
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postcard with your name address and daytime contact address and daytime contact number to Disney Competi-tion, Chronicles (editorial), 51-53 Queen Street, Wolver-hampton, WY1 1ES. Closing date: Thursday, February 4. Usual rules apply. Editor's decision is final.



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Kings of Leon have announced details of a series of huge headline outdoor shows next Summer including an eagerly anticipated gig in Coventry,

Their highly acclaimed fifth album 'Come Around Sundown' became their third consecutive album to debut at number 1 when it topped the UK album charts on release, claiming both the biggest week one sales of the year and the biggest ever first week digital sales along the way.

Like last year's Hyde Park show, their forth-coming December 2010 arena shows sold out in seconds and the Kings of Leon's Summer 2011 concerts are set to be one of the highlights of next year's live calendar



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Alexandra's concert is late Valentine gift





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ARTIST Alan Birch has landed his dream role in a new film – 25 years after first bringing the character to life on stage.

Now 50, Alan first portrayed Inspector Drake in 1985, when playwright David Tristram offered a play to a Brierley Hill theatre group.

He was chosen for the part because he was the tallest member of the group – but little did the actor, of Cobden Street, Wollaston, realise it was an association which would last for a quarter of a century.

Alan takes the leading role in Inspector Drake in White May and the program of the company and has portrayed the leading role in Inspector Drake – The Movie, an independent film made by Mristram, who is from Quarry Bank. He is a member of Mr Tristram's Flying Ducks Theatre Company and has portrayed the flet of the detective a number of times.

Mr Tristram decided to make the film to give his creation a more lasting performance.

The film's premiere will be in the steps of the character drive vehicles and the like."

Alexandra Burke is promising a Valentine's treat just a day late for fans with a spectacular show at Wolverhampton Civic Hall on February 15 as part of her All Night Long UK tour.

Having won the fifth series of The X Factor, Alexandra, right, released her debut album Overcome in 2009.

The album went straight to Number One in the UK and has Number One in the UK and has born four huge chart hits including All Night Long, Broken Heel and two number one singles Hallelujah and Bad Boys fea-turing Flo Rida.

turing Flo Rida.
The album has already sold in excess of 600,000 copies in the UK alone, already making it double platinum selling Her success doesn't stop

Her success doesn't stop there. Having been nominated for a BRIT Award for Best British Single in 2009 and 2010, she picked up the coveted Glamour Women of the Year Award for Best Newcomer in 2010. After ruling the air-

After ruling the air-waves for weeks with her last Top Five hit single, Alexandra has just delivered her new song, Start Without You, which fuses traditional reggae influ-ences with dancehall beats and power

popular and power-pop melodies. Tickets f0or her concert cost £27.50, and are available on 0870 320 7000 or



YOUR EIGHT-PAGE **ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE AND WEEK'S TV VIEWING**



The sound of Jason - page 32













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Company's dream to get kids into the Bard

Wolverhampton winter when Shakespeare4kidz present their children-friendly version of the Bard's tale of fairies, romance and transforma-tion, A Midsummer Night's Dream, at

tion, A Midsummer Night's Dream, at the city's Grand Theatre.

On Tuesday and Wednesday (February 1 and 2) the company aims to make the classic works accessible to a modern young audience and prove that Shakespeare is far from boring with a combination of humour, song and modern language alongside great lines from the original text.

Traditionalists may not approve but according to S4K producer and directory Julian Chenery: "Just as the film Oliver! did for Dickens, we are trying to make Shakespeare's language more understandable and use the musical theatre-style structure but without losing the authenticity of the nar-

but without losing the authenticity of the nar-

"We are making it more appealing without dumbing-down. We are putting on a differ-



WITH perfect timing, Wolverhamp-ton's Arena Theatre features hit Edin-burgh Festival improv-musical show Showstopper! which has this month made the transition into a BBC Radio made the transition into a BBC Radio 4 series and is fast becoming a regular visitor to London's West End. The all-singing, all-dancing cast take sugges-tions from the audience for the theme and plot of the musical . . . and create it on the spot! It is performed at the Wulfruna Street university-linked venue tonight (Friday) at 8pm.

ent type of theatrical production and then, as the children's vocabulary matures, they can go and see more classical productions and enjoy them too."

In Dream, human folk roaming the forest become the unknowing pawns in a battle between the jealous king and queen of fairy-land, who make an ass of the unfortunate

amateur actor Bottom. Performances are at 1.30pm and 7.30pm on Tuesday and at 11am and 1.30pm on Wednesday.
Comedy and music rules at the Grand next weekend with the Magic of Motown show presenting music from the legendary American soul music record label on Saturday, February 5 (6 and 8pm).
Then the Circus Hilarious crew bring their slapstick hilarity featuring modern clown Danny Adams on Sunday, February 6 (1.30 and 6pm).
Members of the Birmingham Royal Ballet move across the city centre from their home venue at Birmingham Hippodrome to the Symphony Hall for an evening of Music and Dance presented by the company's director David Birtley on Friday, February 4.
The show is the last hurrah of the company's 20th anniversary year in the city and will include highlights from the BRB's repertoire, including the much-loved Hobson's Choice and La Fille mal Gardee.
Birmingham Rep's first off-site production is Kenny Baraka's musical post-apocalyptic tale.

s musical post-apocalyptic tale The Rememberers, the one-hour tale of a teenager who holds the key to mankind's future. It will be held in a warehouse at the AE Harris Building in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter from February 4 to 19.

Contact the box office on 0121 236 4455.

There is a Polish comedy ingint at The Crescent Theatre in Birmingham tonight (Thursday) featuring surreal comedy group Lowcy B.

Circus of Horrors bring their modern day freak show to Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre on February B.

The shows is for over 16s.

on February 8. The show is for over 16s

Cinema: Tangled (PG)
DISNEY'S 50th animated feature, Tangled, sees a return to the studio's fairy tale roots with a retelling of the story of Rapuracel, the girl with long golden hair locked away in a tall tower lost in a forest.

And when I say long, I mean looocooong, in this nazzy reboot of a Brothers Grimm classic, Rapunzel can lasso, absell and swing around using her lengthy luxurious locks.

The effects are given an extra oomph by being delivered in 3D. The effects really impressive in an action scene at a collapsing dam and in another when thousands of sky lanterns are released over a spectacular castle.

when thousands of sky latterns are released over a spectacular castle. There is a handsome and witty leading man, charming rogue Flynn Rider (voiced by Zachary Levi), a cute chameleon sidekick called Pascal and a bolshie stallion called Maximus.

a bolshie stallion called Maximus. The animation is, as you would expect, topnotch. Disney has created a feisty new princess in Rapunzel (voiced by Mandy Moore), who is held captive by an evil mother figure. She's actually a witch who kidnapped her from the royal palace determined to keep the secret of eternal youth and healing locked in Rapunzel's glowing tresses. There's even an interesting 'mother-daughter struggle' subtext in her relationship with her captor, who, incidentally, looks rather like Carol Vorderman.

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family. It opens at cinemas today (Thursday).

Leon Burakowski

Stephen K Amos, Civic Hall, Wolverhampton
TECHNOLOGY old and new was among the topics
tackled by comics Seann Walsh and Stephen K
Amos at the Civic Hall.

Zany Brighton-based funnyman Walsh kicked
off the night and provided hearty warm-up for the
main event ahead. His efforts as support act have
earned him his own headline tour, and he plays at
the Civic again on October 18.

Amos's tour is labelled 'the best medicine' with
the aim or getting people to laugh at themselves or
in adversity – and he didn't disappoint. Having
been upgraded from the smaller Wulfrun Hall, the
Civic attendance was somewhat lower than
expected. But from the off, the comedian enjoyed
at errific rapport with those in the audience, quickwittedly brushing aside a heckle for having the
wrong Wolverhampton accent.

A little of his material had been heard before, but
was still cleverly delivered, with his list of topics
ranging from his family life, his diary entries from
the age of 13 and touring, particularly in Australia.

And he found a 'target' with an Antipodean gent
among the crowd.

After more than an hour of stand-up, Amos was
willing to meet and greet his fans in the foyer,
happily signing autographs.

Mark Shipp

Mark Shipp

This week's late deals by coach WEST MIDLANDS DEPARTURE POINT DAYS WAS MON 21 FEB WESTON, SAND BAY (ADULTS ONLY) 5 £179-95

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Scenes from Shake-speare4kidz' production of A Midsum-Pream, left, Puck, the naughty sprite, and, right, Titania with Bottom





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(BBC2, 9.45pm).

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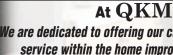
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No.101

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off. M

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Double Crossword

Choose differ quick or cryptic dues - both lift fre same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

- 6. He taresces sup-
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- 7. kiedi graup ta piay an eightsome red?
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LAST VISEN'S SOUTHOUS.
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Sudoku

Fill in the grid below so that			9	7				3	4
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Circlegram

Replace the question male with a letter so that the letters within each circle can be amanged to form words on a common thems. What are the frice words, and the letter represented by the question

The letter represented by the question reading O. Man.

"4 days away with everything taken care

of for just

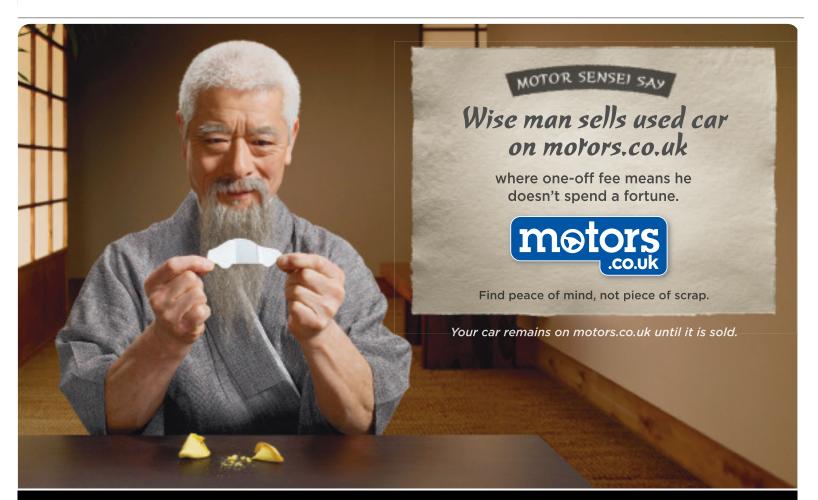
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Get out more in 244



Hills are aloud to Music as Captain von Trapp in time for its Staffordshire stint at Stoke-on-Trent's Regent Theatre. Sound The classic Rodgers and Hammerstein musical will be presented at the Hanley venue from February 15 and March 5. Starring opposite the Australian star is former Emmerdale aloud to

It's Obsession

with Shayne

SHAYNE Ward is back with a new single, Obsession, from the album of the same name, a top 10 hit in Gotta Be Somebody and now the announcement of his first UK tour in two years.

A show stopping performance on The X Factor and the release his third album late in 2010 reminded everyone of his vocal prowess of the Manchester-born winner of the second series of The X-Factor.

Now he is taking Obsession out on the road starting at Wolverhampton Civic Hall on March 15.

Tickets priced £25 are available at Midland Box Office on 0870 320 7000 or online at www.wolvescivic.co.uk

JASON Donovan has joined the cast of the touring pro-duction of The Sound of Music as Captain von Trapp

actress Verity Rushworth, who takes over from Connie Fisher as Maria. Bradford-born Verity played

Bradford-born Verity played bonna Windsor from the age of 12 in the rural soap, leaving the series after 10 years in 2009. She has since appeared in Hairspray in the West End, playing Tracy Turnblad's friend Penny.

Contact the box office on 0844 871 7649 or online at

To be or not to be Bard, that is the question

HAKESPEARE was not the author of Hamlet, instead it was the work of Elizabethan playboy Edward de Vere, 17th Earl

bethan playboy Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, and more shockingly still, it was based upon events from his own life.

That's the sugestion of The Man Who Was Hamlet, a one man performance by George Dillon in which the actor, as the ghost of de Vere, tells his story in a bid to restore his pride and reputation.

The actor, who has won praise for his other touring performance in which he delivers The Gospel of Matthew, will be making the case for de Vere at the Arena Theatre, Wulfruna Street, Wolverhampton, on Tuesday at 7.30pm.

Then on Wednesday, a complete flip at the Arena

Iuesday at 7.30pm.
Then on Wednesday, a complete flip at the Arena when Rannel Theatre present Flhip Flhop, when a pair of painter-decorators end up trying to outdo each with dance moves that turns into pure slapstick comedy.Contact the venue's box office on 01902 321 321 (office hours) or visit www.arenatheatre.info

Recycling a show

AN interactive comedy featuring recycled puppets is
being showcased at Sandwell arts venue The Public
next month. Birmingham based Blossom Theatre is
bringing the environmentally friendly comedy, the
Recycled Puppet Show, to the venue on Friday 11 and
Saturday 12. It features a magical journey by a cast
made of recycled materials.
Audience participation is central and there will be
puppet making workshops before each performance.
On Friday workshops start at 1 pm and 6pm with performances at 2.15pm and 7.15pm. On Saturday the
workshops start at 2pm and 6pm, with performances
at 3.15pm and 7.15pm.
For more information call 0121 533 7161.

For more information call 0121 533 7161.



Jason Donovan and Verity Rushworth who star in The Sound of Music Picture: Paul Coltas

Micky takes new date

EAST End comedian Micky Flanagan's concert date at Birmingham Town Hall on February 6 has proved such a big sell-out success that the Cockney comic has added another date but at the bigger Brum venue of the Symphony Hall on March 31.

the Symphony Hall on March 31. Tickets cost £17.50. Flanagan has appeared on Mock The Week, Michael McIntyre's Comedy Roadshow, had his own Radio 4 show and was one of the hits of last year's Royal Variety Performance.



Celebrations for Mahler's music

THE Birmingham Mahler Cycle, celebrating the works of Austrian Bohemian composer Gusta Mahler, who died 100 years ago, continues with the performance of his final completed symphony, No9, at the Symphony Hall on Wednesday, February 2.

The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra will be conducted by Andris Nelsons in a programme which also includes Mark Anthony Turnage's cello concerto Kai featuring cellist Ulrich Heinen.

The Ninth will get a reprise on Thursday, February 3, at the Symphony Hall, by the CBSO under the baton of Nelsons, which will follow an in-

depth look at the work presented by Stephen Johnson. Mahler's works are re-

imagined by American jazz pianist Uri Caine at jazz pianist Uri Caine at Birmingham Town Hall on February 5 and the cycle continues on February 10 at Symphony Hall when the CBSO perform Kindertotenlieder as part of a programme also featuring works by Schubert and Dvorak.

The late Sir Charles Mackerras was to have conducted the concert. Instead Karl-Heinz Stefners will take the baton.

fens will take the baton.

Contact the box office on 0121 780 3333 or via the website www.thsh. co.uk.

over Elvis MICHAEL "Memphis" MICHAEL "Memphis" King and Steve Halliday start the 76th birthday celebrations for the late King of Rock 'n' Roll Elvis Presley when their Elvis On Tour 76 Special comes to Bilston music

Show all

shook up

venue The Robin on Saturday, January 29.
Covering all eras from the rockabilly early days, through the movie years, the 68 Comeback Special and the latter Vegas concerts, the show is a celebration of all things Elvis.
Tickets cost £18.50 on the door (a pound less in

venue The Robin on Sat-

the door (a pound less in advance) and the box office can be reached at www.therobin.co.uk or on 01902 401211

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1 CLENT COTTAGES
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HAGLEY
3 NEWLANDS CLOSE £595 pcm

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WORDSLEY
42 CROWNOAKES DRIVE £450 pcm

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Home of Property





Spectacular views from this stunning period dwelling

sive semi-rural area with superb views over open farmland, this Georgian home retains much period charm.

Langley Hall, on Langley Road, Lower Penn, is a Grade II listed home believed to date in part from the mid-18th

part from the control of the contury.

Estate agent Berriman Eaton is managing the sale of this five-bedroomed home, inviting offers in the region of £675,000. On approach, the house is set back from the road behind

wrought iron remote-con-trolled gates opening onto a large paved driveway.

This leads to the coach house, which has a double garage beneath and an enter-

garage beneath and an entertainment room over.

At the rear of the coach
house are two storage/workshops, each with a cast iron
Victorian-style staircase
leading to the upper floor leisure room.

This measures 30ft 9in x 18ft 3in and has
a circular front window, a wide doubleglazed rear window, raftered ceiling with
exposed trusses, corner bar with carved
panels and beer pulls and exposed brick
walls. There is also a detached timber spa
chalet.

Aflagstone-newed port leading

chalet.

A flagstone-paved path leads to a gabled porch opening into a hall/sitting room, which measures 14ft 9in x 13ft and has a wide inglenook open fireplace, beamed and raftered ceiling, two radiators and a door to the dining room.

This measures 14ft 6in x 9ft 3in and has

double-glazed windows to the side and rear and double-glazed French doors to the rear arden. A farmhouse-style dining kitchen, meas-

TIPTO
HOPKINS 31
Semi Detached jounge, Kitchen/l least Central Heating Semi Detached jounge, Kitchen/l least Central Heating Semi Detached jounge, Kitchen/l least Central Heating Semi Detack Semi De

for a dishwasher.

Measuring 13ft 10in x 9ft 10in, the double-glazed conservatory has French

This stylish five-bedroomed home has luxurious original features such as raftered ceilings

doors to the terrace, a tiled floor, radiator and full-width glazed concertina doors to the office, which measures 9ft 9in x 5ft 4in. In the rear hall, there is a large cloaks cupboard with fitted storage and illuminated mirror.

A utility area is fitted with a ceramic sink and plumbing for a washing machine. The cloaks and shower room has a fitted suite comprising a WC, wash basin and a tiled double shower cubicle. Stairs lead down from the hall to the lower floor, which has a basement measuring 14ft 3in x 11ft 6in. There is also a wine cellar with a barrel vaulted ceiling.

Galleried

Galleried

An oak staircase leads from the hall to the first floor, which is split into two sec-tions. With dimensions of 15ft x 13ft, the master bedroom has secondary-glazed front and side windows, a cast iron fire-place, beamed and raftered ceiling, two radiators and a door to a small galleried

radiators and a door to a small galacrical landing.

This has an open arch to the dressing room, fitted with a double wardrobe and corner dressing table, wardrobes with sliding mirrored doors and integrated ceiling lighting.

An open arch leads to the bathroom,

fitted with a panelled spa bath, fully-tiled double shower cubicle, WC, bidet and pedestal wash basin.

Bedroom two measures 15ft x 12ft 3in, with a secondary-glazed front window, fitted dressing table and ceiling beam, while the third has dimensions of 9ft x 8ft 6in.

of in.

The bathroom is fitted with a panelled bath and wash basin set within a tiled vanity unit, while the shower room has a refitted white suite comprising a fully-tiled double cubicle, WC and wash basin. A further flight of stairs leads from the front to the upper landing, which has a beamed ceiling. ceiling.

Measuring 15ft 3in x 12ft 3in, bedroom

Measuring 15ft 3in x 12ft 3in, bedroom four has a beamed ceiling, secondary-glazed side window, radiator and access to the partly-boarded roof space. A refitted shower room has a cubicle, WC and wash basin. Bedroom five measures 15ft 6in x 13ft 3in, with a beamed ceiling, single-glazed side window, radiator, access to the roof space, a walk-in wardrobe and a wash basin.

At the rear of the house, the impressive garden has expansive areas of lawn, a large patio and stunning views over open fields and farmland. Call 01902 747744 to

Modern home is of high standard

TUCKED away at the end of a cul-de-sac in one of Wolverhampton's most desirable suburbs is a modern home presented to a

suburbs is a modern home presented to a high standard throughout.

The three-bedroomed home, in Fairoak Drive, Tettenhall Wood, has double glazing, central heating and many other attractive features. Estate agent Bartlams is managing the sale, inviting offers in the region of \$228,950.

A double-glazed door opens into a hallway with a built-in cupboard housing the gas-fired central heating boiler and guest WC, fitted with a low-level suite.

Measuring 20ft 6in x 12ft, the front-facing lounge has a brick chimney breast with recessed flame-effect gas fire.

The study/office measures 9ft x 7ft 9in, with a double-glazed side window. In the dining room, measuring 14ft 6in x

10ft 10in, there is a serving hatch from the

10tt 10th, there is a serving hatch from the kitchen.

In the kitchen, measuring 10ft 8in x 8ft 9in, is a range of wall and base units and an integrated oven.

Upstairs, the rear-facing master bedroom, measuring 12ft x 10ft 8in, has a range of wall-to-wall fitted wardrobes.

Bedroom two measures 14ft x 11ft 10in x 9ft 1in and has a range of fitted wardrobes. There is a further fitted wardrobe in the

third bedroom, which measures 13ft 3in x 8ft 3in and faces the side.

8ft 3in and faces the side. In the bathroom, a contemporary white suite comprises a panelled bath with wallmounted shower, pedestal wash basin and low-level WC. There are ceramic tiled splashbacks and a slatted chrome radiator/towel rail.

At the rear, an enclosed private garden in eatly landscaped. Contact the agent on 01902 754777 to arrange a viewing.



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SUBARU IMPREZA COSWORTH STI GS 400

ROAD TEST

The hottest Subaru Impreza hatch offers performance to rival a supercar, says Richard M Hammond

osworth to retain the bragging rights

or many years, Subaru punched well above its weight in the UK.

A relatively small importer of cars to Britain, the Japanese four-wheel drive specialist was held in particularly high regard by performance cars fans, chiefly because of its Impreza WRX and STi saloon models.

saloon models.

Boasting outrageous standard performance, cutting edge drive-trains and easily tuned engines, these high performance Imprezas also offered four-door practicality, relatively cheap 'bang-for buck' purchase prices and the street-cred that came with an extensive and highly successful rallying

history.

More recently, Subaru has been cutting a lower profile. Although still a proudly niche manufacturer, it has been concentrating on its more mainstream models – the Porester crossover and spacious Legacy estate – while the high performance side of its operation has been gradually fading from sight, particularly without a manufacturer presence in the World Rally Championship.

World Rally Championship.

All the while, however, there have been
Subaru WRX and WRX STi versions of the
Impreza available. But the model has not
proved as popular with high performance
fans since the switch to a hatchback, rather

than a saloon design. It's a situation that has left Subaru





scratching its head; the UK has long had a love-affair with the hot-hatch, the preference for saloon versions of the Subaru is a curious occurrence.

Subaru's answer has been to tweak the line-up – offering the WRX STi model as a

line-up — offering the WRX STi model as a saloon to appease fans and removing the Impreza name from the high performance models, making them a sub-brand in their own right. But not before having one last play with the hatchback model.

The Cosworth Impreza STi CS400 will prove a rare sight on the roads. Only 75 are being crafted for the UK market and with that exclusivity comes an exclusive price tag. Just shy of \$50,000 in fact. That's more than three and a half times the price of an entry level Impreza five-door. It's hard to think of another model with such a gulf between the crucial numbers in the brochure. But then,



it's a very special vehicle. The Cosworth Impreza has not merely been breathed on by the high performance engineer, it's received a

comprehensive going over.

Power is up 33 per cent over the (hardly under-powered) WRX STi. Cosworth has under-powered) WKA SII. Cosworth has redeveloped the engine internals with high performance pistons built in a similar manner to those in the company's F1 engines, stronger, forged con-rods, a unique main bearing design, heavy-duty bolts and gaskets, a high-pressure oil pump, a redesigned exhaust and an all-new turbecharging system.

becharging system.

The result is 395bhp from a four-cylinder unit. 62mph is reached in 3.7 seconds. It pips its nearest competitor, the Mitsubishi Evo FQ400, to the post, and will give a Lamborghii Gallardo costing three times as much a run for its money. The power delivery is

The Cosvorth

Impreza is capable of giving the Lam-

borghini Gallardo a run for

its money

impressive. The model's four-wheel drive system features a 50-50 split as default, launching the car with an initially startling ferocity. It's a little slower to build at lower rpm, but from 3,500rpm the engine really starts to pull, whipping its way through the six-speed transmission in a flurry of induction roar and waste-gate hiss.

The intelligent four-wheel minimises wheel-spin from standing starts, but also bolsters grip through the corners. The Impreza flat-four engine gets the model off to a good start with a low centre of gravity improving cornering ability. The WRX STi version builds on that core ability with the same advanced four-wheel drive system to monitor wheel slip.

But the Cosworth Impreza truly exploits the arrangement with its huge power reserves and Cosworth tuned suspension

with special Eibach springs and Bilstein damper inserts. It takes a lot to provoke under-steer; far too much corner entry speed to be advisable. On a demanding country road the nose will simply tuck in time and time again. On track, the Cosworth Impreza ought to be unshakeable. Get it wrong and 355mm front brakes will bring the car to an abrupt halt.

And, in time honoured Impreza tradition, all of this is delivered from a practical, useable base. Fuel economy is actually not too frightening; the five-door layout with a decent boot is in place. Inside is a slightly more lavish interior with leather bucket seats and aluminium, but nothing to make popping to the supermarket an ordeal. Sure, interior quality is not up there with high performance Audis or BMWs that will cost similar sums—and the steering could be considered a little light at speed although this makes it better around town—but the Subaru will retain bragging right in terms of performance.

Even the ride is surprisingly comfortable for a car with so much pent-up aggression at

least.
FACTS AT A GLANCE: STi CS400,
£49,995. Engine: 2.5-litre diesel unit developing 395bhp and 400lb/ft. Transmission: Sixspeed manual transmission as standard,
driving all four wheels. Performance driving all four wheels. Performance: Maximum speed 155mph (electronically limited), 0-62mph 3.7 seconds. Economy: 27.4mpg. CO2 rating: 243g/km.

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Leon Cupra R	VO60PDK	£27,405	£23,995	£3,410
Leon 1.6 Tdi Ecomotive SE	VE60CDX	£19,300	£15,995	£3,305
Leon 1.2TSi S	VK60RYO	£16,580	£13,495	£3,085
Alhambra 2.0TDi Ecomotive SE	VK60RZH	£29,315	£23,995	£5,140
Leon 1.6TDi DSG SE	VE60CEN	£19,635	£16,495	£3,140
Leon 1.2TSi S	VE60CDV	£16,035	£12,995	£3,040
Ibiza SC 1.4TSi Cupra	VE60CCZ	£19,775	£16,995	£2,780
Altea 1.6TDi S Ecomotive	VO60PFV	£17,655	£13,995	£3,660
ibiza 5DR 1.2TDi S A/C	VK60RYN	£13,500	£11,495	£2,005
Ibiza SC 1.4TSi FR	VK60RYM	£17,005	£14,995	£2,010
Ibiza SC 1.4 Sport	VN60LCU	£12,560	£9,495	£3,065
Ibiza SC 2.0TDi FR	VE60CEV	£17,530	£14,495	£3,035
Ibiza 5DR 1.4 Sport	VN60LCT	£13,895	£10,495	£3,400
Ibiza 5DR 1.4 SE	VK10UXU	£12,650	£9,995	£2,655
Ibiza 5DR 1.2 S A/C	VK10LBU	£11,735	£8,995	£2,740
Altea XL 1.6TDI SE	VK10UYD	£19,680	£14,995	£4,685
Leon 1.9TDi S Emocion	VK10LBP	£17,620	£11,495	£6,125
Leon 2.0TDi FR	VK10UXV	£20,765	£17,995	£2,770
Leon 1.6TDi Ecomotive SE	VK10UXW	£19,080	£16,995	£2,085
Ibiza St 1.4 SE	VA10KAX	£13,450	£10,995	£2,455

Suzuki Demonstrator Clearance

SX4 1.6i SZL	VO60PUV	£13,824	£11,995	£1,829
Swift 1.3i SZ3 3dr	VX10EZU	£10,531	£9,495	£1,036
Alto 1.0i SZ3	VX10EYY	£8,725	£7,295	£1,430
Splash 1.3 DDiS 5dr	VK60RGU	£11,824	£10,495	£1,329
Alto 1.0i SZ4 5dr	VK60RGZ	£9,510	£8,295	£1,215
New Swift 1.2i SZ3 3dr	VO60PVD	£11,629	£10,495	£1,134
New Swift 1.2i SZ3 5dr	VK60PVJ	£12,089	£10,995	£1,094

Kia Demonstrator Clearance

Sorento 2.2CRDi KX1 Auto	VO60OVS	£26,780	£23,995	£2,785
Ceed 1.6CRDi 2 SW	VO600WH	£16,910	£14,495	£2,415
Picanto 1.0i Domino 5dr	VO60OWK	£8,590	£6,995	£1,595
Rio 1.5CRDi Strike 5dr	VO60OWJ	£11,400	£9,495	£1,905
Venga 1.4CRDi 2 5dr	VO60OVN	£14,700	£12,795	£1,905

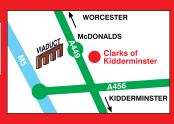
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SDOM



Black belt for Holly at age of 12

A DUDLEY youngster has proved she's a force to be reckoned with by she's a force to be reckoned with by she's a force to be reckoned with by with mum Joanne, dad Nick and gas of 12.

Holly Walters, a pupil at Bishop Milner High School on Burton Road, began training four years ago and is the youngest pupil in her British Modern Karate Association class to a was totally committed," he said.

Modern Karate Association class to she trains twice a week at High

Scintillating DK grab their 15th straight league win

routed struggling Banbury and made it 15 wins from 15 in the Midlands One West division.

DK were forced to make several changes to the side which had beaten Bournville a week earlier.

Jak Davis, Rich Kelley and fly

Pressure tells as the Hawks bag five

good side.

They put on pressure from the first whistle and were rewarded by goals from Kate Hunnisett and Liz

Halas Hawks D 4
The under-12 Dynamos
took on a strong Bewdley
team which had won nine
out of 10 to top the first division of the Stourport league.
Halas fell behind but then
produced an excellent
display to win 4-1 with goals
from Jordan Boffey, Alex
Gardener and Lewis Bryan.
A late home penalty was
saved superbly by Anthony
Cowdell.

Halas Hawks 2

Cowdell.

Halas Hawks 2

Ettingshall 4

A below strength under13s squad led through Dan
Jennings, whose second-half
goal restored the advantage
after the visitors had
equalised.

Ettingshall's strength in

equalised.

Ettingshall's strength in depth saw them run out 4-2 winners. Halas player of the match was Neil Langan.

Wombourne 2

Halas Hawks 1 The under-14s East domi-

nated but were not clinical in their finishing with Jake Walley scoring their only goal. Gornal 2 Halas Hawks 4

Gornal 2 Halas Hawks 4
Goals from Danny Hodges
(2), Lewis Hatfield and
Jamie Nicolls saw the
under-15s win.

Halas Hawks 6
Withymoor 3
A high-scoring under-16s
game went the way of the
Hawks with a hat-trick by
Guy Millward and goals for
Tom Stevens, Joe Powell and
James Harper.

half Gareth Bown were all drafted in.

A second DK try came on 14

The game was all but won after two return and stretched the score to 45-0 with his second try end of the second try of the score to 45-0 with his second try of the left wing, passed neatly inside his man to score scould not take the gloss of what was a very good DK performance ways of 24-0.

But those consolation scores could not take the gloss of what linguish. With the game in the bag DK hampering Bown and Davies, best and went further ahead

The returning Bown converted by the return and stretched the score to 45-0 with his second try of 45-0.

With the game in the bag DK hampering Bown and Davies, best on Luke Greenwood and Tom Bissell as replacements.

The returning Bown converted by the return and stretched the score to 45-0 with his second try of 45-0.

With the game in the bag DK hampering Bown and Davies, and the finding and Eddie Phillips.

But those consolation scores could not take the gloss of what was an live return and stretched the score to 45-0 with his second try of 45-0.

With the game in the bag DK hampering Bown and Davies, and the finding and Eddie Phillips.

But those consolation scores could not take the gloss of what was an live return and stretched the score to 45-0 with his second try of 45-0.

With the game in the bag DK hampering Bown and Davies, and the finding and the score for 55-0.

But those Camp Hill to the volude return and stretched the score to 45-0 with his second try of 45-0.

With th

Banbury 14
Dudley Kingswinford 55
Balf Gareth Bown were all opening, writes Peter Stinton.

Banbury 14
bis own try for a 7-0 lead after when Davis made a great break good work from Ben Connett and from his own half, combining Jon Higgins had created an with Tom Weaver to feed James Jefferson for 17-0.

Within five minutes of the restart DK had scored two more tries, Gareth Davies and Jak Davis both going over.

Davis was enjoying a productive return andstretched the score to 45-0 with his second try in quick succession, converted by Higgins.

Bown flew in for try number nine on 59 minutes, taking a fine tox kick from Higgins, before Higgins himself converted the score for 55-0.

Knocks

Down to 14 men with Langford and with knocks

20 minutes, scoring two tries through Sam Boyle and Eddie Phillips.

Girls League Halas Hawks 5 Kidder Lions 0

HALAS Hawks under-15 girls continued their impres-sive start to the new year with a cup win over a very good side.

rewarded by goals from Kate
Hunnisett and Liz
McAleenan. Further goals
came from Kate Drew (2)
and Rhianne Murray. Player
of the match Rebecca
Ingram was solid in defence.

Boys League
Kingswinford 2
Halas Hawks East 3
The under-nines East
bounced back from last
week's defeat, going two up
through Charlie Greening
and Oliver Miller.

Kingswinford scored but
Miller was again on target
and a second Kingswinford
goal was not enough.
Players of the match were
Oliver Miller and Joshua
Yorke.

Halas Hawks East 4 Gornal

Halas Hawks East 4 Gornal
Athletic 1
Jordan Ward chipped the
keeper to put the under-10s
East ahead, but Gornal levelled through an own goal.
Halas took control in the
second half when Joshua
Parsons (2) and Jordan
Berry netted and kept Halas
at the top of the league.
Bewdley Town 1
Halas Hawks D 4
The under-12 Dynamos

nation on Sunday.

After a cagey beginning, Stour took the lead in the 11th minute. Craig Connor played a clever pass in from the right and Ryan Rowe was given too much room on the edge of the box to turn and smash a low shot past Steve Smith.

did it in style.

day with the

Railwaymen

The Glassboys were 2-0 up after just 23 minutes and defeat proved to be the final straw for Didcot boss Stuart Peace who tendered his resignation on Sunday.

ROYNON SIGNS HEATHENS



The Cumbrian will double up in Premier and National Leagues with Glassboys Redcar and Dudley respectively, but is also in the King's Lynn pool in the top echelon. enjoy away

And Roynon says he can't wait for the action to begin after a stop-start 2010 where he rode for Workington, Stoke and Lynn.

Stoke and Lynn.

He suffered head injuries and a broken bone in his neck in an horrific smash nearly two years ago during a Great Britain squad session at Saddlebow Road. It left him with a blood clot behind the brain; he spent some time in the special neurological unit at Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge and missed all the 2009 Didcot Town 1 Stourbridge 4 STOURBRIDGE boss Gary Hackett had called for his side to improve their Zamaretto Premier Division away record – and they did it in et up.

But after gradually rebuilding last year the 22-year-old could make a mockery of his Heathens starting average of 7.70.

average of 7.70.

"It's all about winning races and building my confidence and that's what I intend to do for the Heathens," said Coventry asset Roynon, who will be introduced to the fans at a club event on February 25.

Reputation

to turn and smash a low shot past Steve Smith.

Then, on 23 minutes, the Glassboys doubled their advantage when Ben Billingham sent over a free-kick from the left that was glanced on by Paul McCone for Leon Broadhurst to volley home his first goal of the season.

The Railwaymen got on the scoresheet in the 42nd minute when David Lawrence hit a low shot that beat Lewis Solly low down at his near post.

Didcot had a chance but Solly denied Lawrence before Jamie Heapy smashed the rebound over. The visitors made the game safe in the 89th minute through Drew Canavan and then put the icing on the cake with a fourth from Lindon Dovey.

The Glassboys' home league game against Oxford City last Tuesday was postponed, as City faced a county cup tie, and rearranged for March 22.

McCauley is the derby winner



Kevin McCauley, left, lands a blow on Wayne Downing in their Black Country duel

The A team hold on

STOURBRIDGE Swimming Club's A team just shaded its B side counterparts in round one of the Worcester Winter

_eague. Double individual Double individual winners were Adam Horton, Tom McCallum and Bethan Walters with Jake Buswell, Nat Dingley, Ellie Lord, Matt McCallum, Lauren Sanders, Richard Spoor A BLACK COUNTRY derby opened the boxing show at Birmingham's Tower Ballrooms as Stourbridge's former Midlands champion Kevin McCauley took on West Bromwich's one-time British Masters title con-tender Wayne Downing at mid-dleweight. veight.

dleweight.

McCauley couldn't miss the body
shots early on and started to put his
punches together as the first round
wore on, with his opponent showing
his mettle by taking a flush uppercut
to the chin to the chin

to the chin.

Downing hung on to go the distance but McCauley was a 40-36 points winner after the four rounds.

Glenn McCrory's top prospect Aakash Hussain opened his professional career just as he dreamed—with a win on "home" territory.

Hussain, the 18-year-old protege of

g in their Black Country duel
the former IBF world cruiserweight
champion and now Sky Sports Fight
Night commentator, is from Newcastle
but was keen to make his debut in
Birmingham, where he has many relatives and friends.
And it could not have gone much
better for the former junior ABA title
holder whose cruiserweight opponent
was Bulgarian Verban Borisov.
Hussain won the first-round comfortably, despite Borisov landing a stiff
right hook, But that was as good as it
got for the Bulgarian and Hussain won
all four rounds in a 40-36 points call
from referee Terry O'Connor.
Walsall's Danny Clews made his
debut at light middleweight against
Tamworth's wily veteran Matt Seawright in a six-rounder.
It wasn't easy but Clews used his
skills to win by two rounds 58-56.

awrence return boosts the Saxons

recent return from France of tight head prop Andi Lawrence, Stourbridge Saxons Director of Rugby Neil Mitchell is full of confidence about prospects for the rest of the season.

But with his squad now supplemented by the giant former Bee, British and Irish Cup calls from Worcester nearing an end and confidence about prospects for the rest of the season.

Last Saturday's futile journey to Launceston, to witness the Polson Bridge pitch stubbornly refuse to thaw, means the Saxons now face the challenging prospect of playing National One fixtures on no fewer

WITH his side boosted by the than 15 consecutive Saturdays.

Improved

He says: "Andi's return is great vs for us. "He carries the ball really well, and improved hugely as a scum-

maging tighthead last season, after swapping from the loosehead.

"As well as Andi, we have Time Pickard, Will Davis, Adam Sturdy and Joe Baker all competing for front row spots."

"This means we now have plenty of front row resources, a resilience which I imagine will prove vital during what will be a pretty remorseless run of games," he added.

Looking ahead to the home game with Blackheath, Mitchell said the "But with Andi back, we have no maging tighthead a really physical fears whatsoever on that score, and will at least match them in the tight. "Charlie Hayter and Tom Richardson will both be fit to face Blackheath, and fly-half Cameron Brown may also return. "We are expecting number eight yames Freeman back from Worcester, as their game around a very strong front row," will also have a look midweek and see who else Richard Hill might make available to us."

Whiley's Grand Slam debut

WHEELCHAIR tennis ace Jordanne Whiley has made a surprise Grand Slam debut.

eenager arrived in Austeenager arrived in Australia ready to play the ITF 3 Series Melbourne Open at Albert Reserve Tennis Centre, the practice ground for the Australian Open.

However. British

tace ground for the Australian Open.
However, British number one and world number eight Lucy Shuker had to withdraw from the main event with injury, giving Whiley the wild card slot she initially missed by one ranking place.
"I was a bit shocked to hear I would be playing the Grand Slam instead of the ITF 3, but I'm more excited than anything else," said the 18-year-old before going on court.

Tough

Whiley eventually went out in straight sets to world number four Jiske Griffioen, 6-4 6-1. But if she was nervous it didn't show as she broke service in the first game and led 4-2 before her experienced Dutch opponent rallied and took command. Whiley has also taken

Whiley has also taken Shuker's doubles slot to

partner Australia's Daniela di Toro. And their task looks even greater as they were drawn to face reigning Wimbledon and US Open champions Esther Vergeer and Sharon Wal-raven of the Nether-lands.

Next week Whiley competes in the Sydney International C before returning hom continue her training at David Lloyd in Dudley.

Causeway on march

CAUSEWAY climbed into fourth in the Midland Alliance with a 3-1 home win over Willenhall Town.

lenhall Town.
Danny Jones notched
for Causeway but Dean
Williams intercepted a
back pass to level with a
curling shot. An end to
end affair was settled by
goals from Ben Stretton
and Will Tibbetts.

The Stourbridge Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Wolverhampton on Thursday January 27, 2011.





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National Express West Midlands have six travel shops which cover the West Midlands, Black Country and Coventry area; Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Solihull, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton.

Our travel shops sell a wide range of Travelcards for adults, students and school children. So, take a visit to your local travel shop for up-to-date travel information and bus timetables.

Your nearest travel shop is in Dudley, and can be found in the Bus Station, Fisher Street, where the manager Jayne Blower and her team look forward to meeting you and happily answering any queries you may have.

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Further route information



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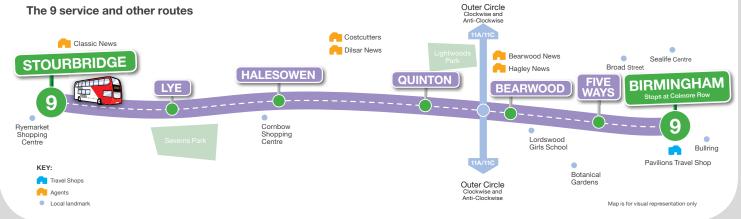
The average frequency of the number 9 every day is 8 minutes.

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7/8 mins	7/8 mins	7/8 mins	20 mins	20 mins	20 mins	20 mins

Peak - Mon-Fri 07.30 to 09.30 and 15.30 to 18.00 Daytime - Mon-Fri 09.30 to 15.30, Sat 09.00 to 18.00, Sun 10.00 to 18.00

Evening - 18.00 to the end of the service

The 9 service and other routes



Did you know that you can now gain service updates. route planners and diversion notices at the click of a button? Prior to Christmas, National Express West Midlands launched a brand new website providing the most up-to-date and easily accessible travel news in the region.

The new website is also accessible from mobile phones for the first time and focuses on making travel easier, including:

- Service updates for major incidents such as road closures or snow diversions
- A route planner for people uncertain of their bus route
- · Simple service maps showing the location of your nearest bus stop
- · Travel news accessible from mobile phones while 'on the go'

Following your first visit it will remember which website you require - West Midlands, Coventry or Metro - and tailor the information to suit you. Selecting and purchasing tickets has also been made quicker and easier by reducing the amount of pages you have to click through.

So go on, get online today at nxwestmidlands.co.uk and we're sure you'll love your new website as much as we do!



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Safer Travel on National **Express West Midlands**



Crime on and around the West Midlands bus network has plummeted by 19% over the last year, new figures from the Safer Travel partnership reveal.

Initiatives such as CCTV installation on buses, and spot checks with inspectors and West Midlands Police has led to a 54.5% reduction in crime on and around the region's bus network over the last three years. This reduction has shown just how much the team's operations expertise has grown since its successful launch five years ago.

Safer Travel, a partnership between National Express West Midlands and West Midlands Police have two full-time teams that work together to make bus journeys even safer by deterring crime and anti-social behaviour.

Inspector Cate Webb-Jones, head of the Safer Travel Police Team, said: "Increasing trust and confidence is one of our main objectives and aim for every commuter to travel in a safe environment, free from anti-social behaviour and crime.'

The success of Safer Travel operations rely on community intelligence, and encourage members of the public to speak to the team and provide them with information about matters such as drugs, misuse and criminal damage.

You can contact Safer Travel or provide information by visiting www.safertravel.info.







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